

Mueller's Gibbon

Scientific Name: *Hylobates muelleri*

Class: Mammalia

Order: Primates

Family: Hylobatidae



The Mueller's Gibbon has a head and body length that ranges from 17 to 25 inches, and a weight that ranges from 17-1/2 to 28-1/2 pounds. Females are the same size as males. General coloration is a blue-gray, with the cap and chest darker. Many of them are almost white at birth, and attain final coloration at 2 to 4 years. The hair is dense. The hands are used as hooks, not grasping the limbs. When walking on the ground or on a limb the arms are held high for balance. Gibbons can leap from branch to branch for 30 feet or more. They are primarily diurnal and exclusively arboreal. Gibbons generally show preferences for small, scattered sources of pulpy fruit, which brings them into competition more with birds and squirrels than with other primates. They are monogamous, and an adult pair and their offspring occupy a small, stable

home range, which is defended. Grooming is the most important social behavior. Play, centered on the infant, is the next most common.

Range

Borneo

Habitat

Deciduous monsoon and evergreen rainforests

Gestation

7 to 7-1/2 months

Litter

1

Behavior

Hylobates means "Dweller in the trees", and Mueller's Gibbon fully justifies the name. They exceed all other animals in agility. Movement is primarily by brachiation, in which the arms are extended above the head to suspend and propel the body. Most traveling is by swinging from branch to branch through the trees. Unlike the monkeys, which feed in large groups and can more easily digest unripe fruit, gibbons eat mainly ripe fruit; they also eat significant quantities of young leaves and a small number of invertebrates, an essential source of animal protein. About 35% of the daily active period of 9-10 hours is spent feeding and about 24% in travel.

Reproduction

The inter-birth cycle is 2 to 3 years. The estrous cycle is about 30 days. Copulation is usually dorso-ventral with the female crouching on a branch and the male suspended behind, but occasionally they copulate facing each other. Infants initially cling around the mother's body like a belt. Weaning is gradual, and usually completed early in the second year. Sexual maturity is attained at about 8 to 9 years.

Wild Diet

Leaves, fruit, flowers, buds, insects